10: French S-4 (no date) 1951 E16 Slavic Peoples E16

No wonder then that the icons are so highly revered, that famous icons are carried in procession through the streets, or brought by the clergy to the bedside of the sick.

So potent is the link between the icon and its prototype that many icons are regarded as "wonder-working icons" In fact the wonder-working icon is the icon *par excellence*. The belief that such icons are endowed with miraculous power has given rise to numberless legends.[1] They may tell of an icon's being the means of curing sickness and other ills which flesh is heir to, of bringing material good fortune to the devout believer, of securing the icon's own safety when menaced by danger, of rewarding its veneration and even resenting and punishing insult, physical injury and neglect, but mercifully restoring the sinner after his repentance. Not all of this is official Orthodox teaching: much of it belongs to the sphere of popular religion, where it may go to fantastic lengths.[2]

Presumably the orthodox interpretation of such happenings is that at the intercession of the saint depicted on the icon, God grants the request of the petitioner who prayed before it. In the popular mind such an explanation may readily slide into the conception that the saint is the benefactor because this particular picture of him was venerated, and that again may easily slip into the feeling that it is the actual icon itself which has worked the miracle or conferred the blessing.

There exist a relatively large number of pictures of the Blessed Virgin which tradition attributes to St. Luke, and these are treated with deep reverence. But a place of their own in the heart of the Orthodox believer belongs to the "Icons not made with Hands". These are icons the originals of which are believed to have come into existence without human agency. Such are the Vernicle, the legend of which is well known in the West also; and an image of Christ imprinted upon a cloth sent to Abgar, King of Edessa, by Christ himself and subsequently brought to Constantinople. This is the most ancient of the "Icons not made with Hands". But there are others, and they, and the copies made of them (though some are said

[1] See R. M. Dawkins for many such connected with the icons of Athos, in *The Monks of Athos*, London, 1936.

[2] Charles Diehl in *Cambridge Mediaval History*, Vol. IV, p. 6.

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to be impossible to copy, or even to photograph) are regarded with the deepest veneration.[1]

The canonical authority upon which the veneration of icons rests is the decree of the second council of Nicaea which is the seventh Ecumenical Council (see p. 54). The doctrinal basis is found in the fact of the Incarnation. God cannot be represented in His eternal being.[2] But God became man and took a body of material flesh. Because of this a picture may lawfully be made of Him. Further, in assuming a human body He used matter as the vehicle of spirit, rescued it from corruption and consecrated it to a share in His redemptive purpose. What is true of Christ's material body, is true of other forms of matter such as the material elements in the sacraments, and, in some measure, of the icons. The icons are, therefore, worthy of veneration, though in theory the degree of veneration is strictly limited.

[1] R. M. Dawkins has a chapter on "Icons not made with Hands"—in his *Monks of Athos*, Chapter 18.

[2] Yet icons exist which depict the Holy Trinity as two throned Figures side by side, with the Dove above them.

5: Kemp E-4, 5 (1926-1933)1935
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the sacra of the cult, especially the products of sacrificial offering, and, as to-day, a number of those material objects which, in the reverence of the simple person towards all that serves him, acquires a force and quasi-sacred symbolism. All things and organisms are treated with respect, and it is not so much that certain of them are picked out for veneration or as the objects of cult-worship, as that the common outlook on dynamic nature gives an individual character and hence a recognised function to each species.

The veneration of the oak tree does not save it from fire; that of the cherry tree makes it a sin to burn its wood or even to cut its branches: the yew is powerful, and may not be burned, but it can be hewn and carved and made into useful objects, dishes, handles, ploughs, boxes, spindles, trays, as well as crosses and amulets, which are then particularly safe or lucky. The blackthorn is used for magical purposes, such as impaling a vampire; it is recommended to use it in making wooden implements for the sake of its magical properties, but the tree itself can be regarded almost with dread, and may not be injured or cut down or uprooted. Nearly everywhere the grafting of fruit-tree slips on wild trees, particularly on wild pears and cherries, is thought to be a virtuous act, amounting to a form of charity. I have heard of a peasant doing so as an act of expiation, a desire to obtain merit (*zadužbina*), in a district which knows little nowadays of particular tree cults. Where a ritual-agricultural calendar is followed in the traditional manner, all grafting is reserved for special days, sometimes with a special local etiology. Individuals sometimes mark the birth of a child or an animal by fertilising a tree in this way.[1] Further, I have seen over and over again in remote and isolated places, that a wild tree has been ennobled, apparently for no sound economic purpose. While I know that almost a sentimental element is

[1] At Rakljansko Polje a pine tree was said to have sprung from a branch stuck in the ground by the Empress Milica when Car Lazar was born. Cf. J. Pančić, *Iz Prirode*, p. 52. Similar acts of commemoration are, of course, well known in other parts of the world.

5: Kemp E-4, 5 (1926-1933)1935
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Roman bath entirely disappears from the North Balkans, although public baths were known to the Avars also. At the present time, the Turkish bath is restricted to a specific cultural region, where a recent Asiatic influence has been concentrated. As it now retreats this excellent institution also falls into decay. But the bath and the use of steam for sweating, now universal amongst the South Slavs, rubbing and massage, more or less symbolical washing and bathing, and the manipulation of broken limbs and the dressing of wounds, are to be reckoned amongst the oldest of their practices. Archaeological finds witness to healed wounds and fractures, but we know nothing of prehistoric trepanation amongst the South Slavs—the only European race, with the Albanians and some Caucasians, which continued the practice almost within living memory.

Offerings and vows, ritual performances and acts connected with fertility cults, were the basis of mystical healing. Hydrotherapy includes also the worship of water spirits, and, amongst Lithuanians, of a personified watery element. Niederle adds to this list of reconstructed primitive medicine the use of oils or unguents which preserved strength and health,[1] and a number of Eastern aromatics, known in primitive times.

Plants introduced in historical times have added to the botanical mythology, and enjoy a symbolism of their own; just as field-glasses, pipe-lighters, petroleum, trains, firearms and other more recent gifts of material civilisation, receive their part in contemporary folk-lore, whose incorporating activity is only now beginning to decline, and in some cases, a magico-religious part. Firearms have developed a complete legend of their own; pipe-lighters are sometimes used for producing ritual fire, though matches are universally disqualified; and so on.

Wheat, which in the Middle Ages was cultivated only in a very limited area, and, in the early nineteenth century, was still little used in the interior of Serbia, has a universal ritual

[1] Cf. L. Niederle, *Slovanské Starožitnosti*, I, p. 127.